



CASTLE HILL

38 Years of Influence: Celebrating the Castle Hill Community



The Early Days of Castle Hill by Joyce Johnson

In 1971 Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill was taking its first tentative steps toward becoming a successful art center. And tentative was the word. There was no money, just a wonderful old New England barn that had cried out for years to be converted to an art center. Eventually the cry was heard by a group of people who wanted just that. The alternative would have been fateful for the Snow's Stables, over a century old and once the hub of community activity. Built around 1882, it was used by Charles W. Snow for multiple purposes, including keeping a team of horses, storing equipment for his building trade, and serving as a retail paint store. He also rented

sections to ever-changing tenants.

Contractor Peter Brown, who bought the property in the 1960s, told a group of people who first assembled to discuss the barn's future that if artists were not interested in using the space as studios or for a school, he would demolish the building and use the lot for another purpose.

I attended that meeting of a handful of artists and craftsmen in August 1971. It was organized by the late Harry Hollander, who wanted a place to teach his specialty, working in plastics. Those who met at the home of craftsman Albert Kaufman were indeed very interested in the availability of studio space, even creating an art center. But without funds, and no one offering to produce them, the meeting ended without resolve, except that Brown was encouraged enough by the group's interest to move forward with renovations to stabilize the building, with the hope of renting sections as artists' studios.

For five years I had been running the Nauset School of Sculpture at my studio in North Eastham. Several weeks after the meeting, Hollander found me at my Truro home. Someone had pointed the general direction of my isolated homestead in a kettle pot and he arrived, tramping through a swamp and brambles, having missed the dirt road leading in. He suggested that I move my school to the barn and add a few diverse workshops to the program, including his particular workshop on plastic techniques. He urged me to take a look at what Brown was doing to renovate and repair the barn-adding windows for north light and reconstructing floors and walls to convert the barn into seven individual studios.

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The Center had approached Dan Klubock, a Boston lawyer, to begin applying for non-profit status, which was finally certified a year or so later. He also counseled me, in the initial stages during the fall of 1971, to squelch a move by several residents of Castle Road to stop the Center. Since schools are allowed in residential areas, the attempt was groundless and thankfully faded away. We, of course, had no idea whether the Center would succeed. I was prepared to lose no more than \$2000 that first summer. As it worked out, we made a "profit" of about that much, some of which was paid me as salary. We need not have feared. The response to Castle Hill was steady and enthusiastic. Volunteers began to surface. Many, such as Ella Jackson, Mary Lou Friedman and Eleanor Meldahl, are still working to keep the center afloat with fundraising and promotional efforts and of course there were Doris and Chet Harris, without whom there would never have been a ceramic department. The economic reality was that even with so many volunteers, tuition still covered only about half of the operating costs. A board of trustees to help with fundraising was critical and soon came together.

Truro proved to be the ideal location. The town had no center for artists and writers. All ages were soon attracted to Castle Hill as though there were a magnet hidden among the barn's weathered beams. Some came to learn, others to teach or to fold flyers and stick labels on them. Others came to meet others-to feel a part of a worthwhile project.

Josiah Child, a retired Boston architect, had recently bought a home in Truro just up the hill from the Center. As a board member, he saw its potential and invited Louise Tate, the director of the newly-formed Massachusetts Council for the Arts, to see Castle Hill in the early fall, after the first summer. She liked what she saw and gave the Center its first grant, \$5000 for administrative salaries, which was repeated a second year. By the end of the first trial summer we were renting five of the seven studios. A year later we took over the entire barn and tower, which had become the Center's administrative offices.

The next eight years were thrilling and exhausting. Each summer the enrollment increased at least 10 percent. The evenings as well as the days were filled with classes and events. A lecture and concert series drew crowds of over 100 people. In a few years the number of classes rose to over 40 offerings, among them a series of writing courses. Courses on nature were added, such as experimenting with natural dyes with Cape Cod National Seashore naturalist Hal Hinds. Dr. Graham Giese and Barbara and Charles "Stormy" Mayo taught coastal ecology and sea life and were excited enough by the response to start their own school the next year-the Center for Coastal Studies, which is now nationally acclaimed for its whale research.

Some of the most exciting workshops in those early days centered on the ceramic department, with ceramicist Mikhail Zakin acting as the Pied Piper of clay. She led students to discover over 12 natural clays at local beaches, most low-fire, but a few high-fire. They experimented with the clays and one summer built a wood-fired kiln in the back area, staying up for 24 hours to feed the straw and clay hulk filled with hand-crafted pots. Primitive pit firing was another course that attracted large classes.

The success of the Center was not without its down moments. Harris, on Memorial Weekend just before our anticipated opening in late June 1972, complained of a backache and went home to Binghamton to see her doctor. Within a short time she was diagnosed with cancer. She taught only one day at the Center and passed away the next spring, leaving a gaping hole in our program and dreams. She and her husband had completely outfitted the ceramic department with its sturdy tables, secondhand metal stools, deck, and kick wheels lovingly designed and constructed for the program. In 1975, with only three years under our belt, Brown said he intended to sell the property and offered it to the fledgling board at a generously low price. A yearlong fundraising effort produced the down payment and we became landowners, filled with both excitement and anxiety.

The need for a strong board became clear if the Center was to honor its new obligations in maintaining the two buildings and the grounds. Friedman, a summer resident, agreed to become president of the board for a year and was succeeded by comic strip creator Lee Falk, who also had a summer home in Truro. He instituted a financial plan that has kept the Center in the black for almost two decades, giving subsequent presidents freedom to address the many other challenges that have arisen since Castle Hill's infancy.

Joyce Johnson, a writer and sculptor, was the founder of Castle Hill, president for six years, and director for eight years. This story was printed in Provincetown Arts magazine.



Tracey Anderson
Instructor
Chair, Artists Advisory Council
I Love You, You Pay My Rent
mezzotint / pencil on paper, 30 x 23
Represented by Julie Heller Gallery

Richard Baker
Instructor
7 Books, 2007
gouache on paper, 22.5 x 24
\$3,000

Bailey Bob Bailey
COG / Light / Time, 2009
foam, wood, acrylic
60 x 24 x 24, \$4,000

Donald Beal
Instructor
Self Portrait, 2007
oil on canvas, 40 x 30
Represented by Berta Walker Gallery
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Heather Blume
Instructor
Human Nature, 2009
mixed medium ceramic
26 x 12 x 10, \$2,500

James Brunelle, Jr.
Moon Totem
oxidized raku
13 x 8.5, \$500

Cid Bolduc
Head Studio Manager & Instructor

Buckets, 2008
encaustic, 6 x 24, \$1,600
Represented by Gallery 10

Cid Bolduc
Head Studio Manager & Instructor
Monday Morning
encaustic, 8 x 24, \$1,800
Represented by Gallery 10

WM Burney
Frisk
oil on canvas
18 x 22, NFS

Dorothy Cochran
Instructor
Portal, 2006
solar plate etching & embellishment
20 x 16, \$800

Jack Coughlin
untitled #3, 2008
ink and charcoal on paper
14 x 24, NFS

Joan Hopkins Coughlin
Still Life with Gauguin, 2000
acrylic on canvas
26 x 26, NFS

Salvatore Del Deo
Low Tide in West End
oil on canvas
22x28, \$6,000
Represented by Berta Walker Gallery

Romolo Del Deo
Troubled Heart
bronze, unique 55 x 12 x 22
\$10,000
courtesy of Berta Walker Gallery

Rita Derjue
Instructor
Corn Hill
watercolor
16 x 19, NFS

Martha Dunigan
Connection, 1989
wood, rock, iron, clay, string, NFS
Represented by Berta Walker Gallery

Breon Dunigan
Ingress, Vaporous, Surveillance, & Emmissary
2005, 2007, hydrocal, metal \$4,800

Mona Dukess
Artists Advisory Council
Totem, 2006
handmade papers on wood
6 x 6.5, \$1,800
Represented by: Kobalt Gallery

Bill Evaul
Dancing Houses II, 2008
white-line woodcut
18 x 34, \$3,200

Lisbeth Firmin
Instructor
Two Women Walking, Union Sq. North
2009, oil on wood panel, 16 x 20, \$2,200
Represented by Rice-Polak Gallery

Lisbeth Firmin, Instructor
Walking the Dog, Union Sq. North, 2009
oil on wood panel, 16 x 20, \$2,200
Represented by Rice-Polak Gallery

Tod Osma Gallinger
Basket, 1930
reeds, 13 x 10, NFS

Tod Osma Gallinger
Books, as priced

Anne Gilman
Instructor
When Things Go Away, 2008
6 panel woodcut, 20.25 x 73
\$2,600

Bonney Goldstein
Instructor
Seaching For Service
mixed media, 14 x 14, \$950

Bonney Goldstein
Instructor
They Will Be Waiting A Long Long Time
mixed media, 14 x 14, \$950

Robert Henry, Instructor
The Man Behind It, 1999
oil on canvas, 50 x 40
\$9,000
Represented by: Berta Walker Gallery



Harry W. Holl
Instructor
Coil Pot Yoman Style
stoneware, 19 x 15, NFS
Represented by Scargo Pottery

Harry W. Holl
Instructor
Mask Renee
stoneware, bronze, 17 x 10, NFS
Represented by Scargo Pottery

Brenda Horowitz
Mill Pond Red, 2008
acrylic on canvas, 32 x 36, \$6,000

Judith Howard
Associate Board Member
3/11/1945 - 3/11/2008, 2008
monoprint, 14 x 16, NFS

Leslie Jackson
Instructor
Mountains Evening, 2008, acrylic, \$950

Leslie Jackson
Instructor
Moontime, 2008 acrylic, \$950

Eugene Jackson
Homage to Darwin
woodcut, 24 x 26

Ella Jackson
Founder
Longnook, 1940
oil on canvas, 20 x 24

Joyce Johnson
Founder
Forms in Bloom, 2009
mahogany, 19 x 9 x 6, \$15,000

Joyce Johnson
Founder
Abstract Figure, 1988
ceramic, 15 x 18 x 16, \$3,000

Judyth Katz
Sea Rocks, Big Sur, 2009
acrylic on paper, 24 x 33

Kim Victoria Kettler
Night Near The Flats, 2009
oil on canvas, 36 x 46, \$3,800
Represented by Addison Art Gallery

Anne Lord
Equine Vessel
clay, 20 x 12 x 12, \$1,000

Sarah Lutz
Associate Board Member
Congerries (Bloom), 2009
oil on panel, 24 x 20, \$2,000
Represented by Lohin Geduld
& DNA Gallery

Phillip Malicoat
Seated Figure, 1965
oil on canvas, 36 x 30, NFS

Joanne Mattera
Instructor
Uttar 230, 2003-2008
encaustic on panel, 18.5 x 18, \$3,000

Joanne Mattera
Instructor
Uttar 234, 2003-2008
encaustic on panel
18 x 18, \$3,000

Eleanor Meldahl
Founder
Pine, 1960
ink, paper, 34 x 50, NFS

Cherie Mittenthal
Executive Director
Woman with Cormorant
oil stick, graphite
20 x 27, \$900
Represented by Kobalt Gallery

Joan McD Miller
Instructor
Passing By, 2000, 18 x 12, \$1,200
Represented by: Kendall Gallery

Antonia Ramis Miguel
Instructor
Constructivist Still Life, 2001-09
oil on canvas, 24 x 20, \$1,950

Laura Moriarty
Instructor
Whole Wide World, 1999
encaustic on panel
40 x 64 diptych, \$6,000

Ewa Nogiec
Provincetown - Winter
oil on board
30 x 20, \$750

Rosalind Pace
Hope Springs Eternal, 1996
collage with papers, pastel, acrylic
28.5 x 28.5
\$2,500

Richard J. Pepitone
Instructor
Snap Shot Series (1), 02-09
digital image, acrylic on board
8.5 x 10, NFS

Richard J. Pepitone
Instructor
Snap Shot Series (2), 02-09
digital image, acrylic on board
8.5 x 10, NFS

Joan Pereira
Instructor
Malicoat's Studio, 2008
oil on canvas, 16 x 20, \$1,900
Represented by: Shore Gallery

Anna Poor
Board Member & Instructor
Untitled, 1996
mahogany and oils
9 x 4 x 11, \$5,000

Anna Poor
Board Member & Instructor
Balancing Act on Floating Chair, 2002
bronze relief, 11.25 x 7.25 x .5, \$2,000

Elizabeth Pratt
Instructor
End of a Perfect Day, 2008
watercolor, 27 x 36, \$1,800
Represented by Addison Gallery

Peggy Prichett
Associate Board Member
Becoming, 1999
earthenware, 17 x 10.5, NFS

Daniel Ranalli
Headless Buddah / Buddah Head
diptych photograph, 18 x 28
courtesy of DNA Gallery, \$800

Marian Roth
Instructor
She Loves It At The Edge, 2009
oil and pencil on gessoboard, 10 x 10
\$800
Represented by Kobalt Gallery

Marian Roth
Instructor
January, Herring Cove, 2009
oil and pencil on gessoboard, 10 x 10
\$800
Represented by Kobalt Gallery

Julia Salinger
Instructor & Board Member
The Last Remains
mixed media on paper
34 x 26, NFS
Represented by Julie Heller Gallery

Nene Schardt
Red and Black #2
collage, 13 x 13, NFS

Mira Schor
Instructor
Fog, 2003
oil on linen, 2 x 16, \$2,000

Mira Schor
Instructor
White Speech Bubble, 2008
oil on linen, 12 x 16, \$2,000

Sidney Simon
Woman with Looking Glass
Mixed Media, 24 x 18.5 x 22, NFS

Elsa Johnson Tarantal
Associate Board Member
Swimmer, bronze
32 x 10 x 10, base 26 x 13.5 x 14.5
\$12,000
Represented by Kendall Gallery

Stephen Tarantal
Currents, 1984
shaped canvas, acrylic, wood
36 x 48, \$6,500

Vicky Tomayko
Instructor
Time and Distance, 2009
monotype, 33 x 25, \$1,500
Represented by Schoolhouse Gallery

Selina Trieff
Instructor
Pilgrim, 2008
oil on canvas, gold leaf
24 x 24, \$7,000
Represented by Berta Walker Gallery

Tabitha Vevers
Instructor
EDEN (Not 2 but 1), 2007
oil and gold leaf on ivorine
5.5 x 7.5
Collection of Machado and Silvetti
Represented by DNA Gallery

TJ Walton
untitled
oil, gesso on canvas
24 x 30, \$3,800

Ray M. Wells
Lost and Found, 1970's
collage under plexiglass
22 x 20, NFS

Peter Watts
Artists Advisory Council
Red Berries, 2008
oil on canvas, 24 x 26, \$4,000
Represented by Berta Walker Gallery

Cyndi Wish
If, if, if,
linoleum, mixed media
20 x 18, \$300

Mikhail Zakin
Instructor
Black Gourd, clay
Collection of Joyce and Martin
Halpern



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